

PREPARATIONS FOR THE 1999 MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

Proposal on Electronic Commerce

Communication from Venezuela

The following communication, dated 11 October 1999, has been received from the Permanent Mission of Venezuela.

Ministers should agree to:

1. Foster an environment which will limit the application of regulations not provided for under the GATT and/or GATS or TRIPS which could discourage the development of electronic commerce, taking into consideration the reports of the various Committees or other reports provided for under the WTO Agreements. Ministers agree to guarantee the particular needs of developing countries as regards special and differential treatment and the possibility of ensuring appropriate policy spaces related to the development of electronic commerce in all its forms, especially with respect to access to and transfer of technology.
 2. Accept that the rules of the GATT, GATS and TRIPS are applicable to electronic commerce.
 3. Accept that all GATS provisions are applicable to electronic commerce and that other provisions should be evaluated in future, as and when any such provisions are defined.
 4. Set up a single working group to pursue the evaluations begun by other committees in accordance with the mandate of the Ministers of the Geneva Ministerial Conference, as well as the practice of not taxing electronic transactions until negotiations in the Round are concluded, or until such time as the final results of the aforementioned evaluations are produced and Ministers have sufficient information to make a final recommendation.
-